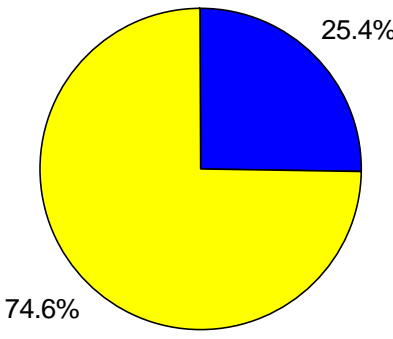


## 31-01- Site Plan Review and Processing

Fund/Agency: 001/31 Land Development Services		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CAPS Percentage of Agency Total</b></p> 
Personnel Services	\$3,876,034	
Operating Expenses	\$905,384	
Recovered Costs	(\$22,709)	
Capital Equipment	\$38,000	
<b>Total CAPS Cost:</b>	<b>\$4,796,709</b>	
Federal Revenue	\$0	
State Revenue	\$0	
User Fee Revenue	\$6,030,877	
Other Revenue	\$0	
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$6,030,877</b>	
<b>Net CAPS Cost:</b>	<b>(\$1,234,168)</b>	
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this CAPS	70/69.5	

### ► CAPS Summary

Site Plan Review and Processing provides land development review, ensures that the environment is protected, and coordinates with development professionals and citizens to ensure that both interests are considered in proposed land development projects. As the County is further developed and new communities and services are introduced into existing neighborhoods and commercial districts, close coordination of these interests becomes of even greater importance. Site Plan Review and Processing ensures that the proposed new construction addresses existing area infrastructure issues including transportation, sanitary sewer, and stormwater, as well as issues relating to tree cover, screening, stream and watershed quality, and other environmental concerns. This CAP also ensures that land disturbance, and public and private facility construction conform to the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia and to policies adopted by the Board of Supervisors with respect to the quality of new public infrastructure; control of erosion and sedimentation, storm drainage, storm water management, tree preservation; and protection of public waters.

## *Land Development Services*

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Site Plan and Processing includes the Environmental and Facilities Review Divisions (East and West), Urban Forestry Division, Code Analysis Division and Plan and Document Control, of the Office of Site Development Services. The Environmental and Facilities Review Divisions serve as the primary review authority for proposed construction plans and plats and provide overall coordination of numerous other reviews by other agencies and specialty fields. The Urban Forestry Division is one such specialty area, which focuses on ensuring that proffered tree preservation, landscaping, and screening is satisfactorily addressed on the construction plans and during construction. Additionally, the Urban Forestry Division provides input on rezoning applications to improve tree preservation during the planning stages preceding the site plan and construction processes. The Code Analysis Division is responsible for administration of the relevant sections of the County Code, Zoning Ordinance and Public Facilities Manual pertaining to the land development process. The Plan and Document Control Section checks plan and plat applications for submission acceptance, administers the distribution of those documents to relevant reviewing authorities, and tracks progress to ensure that they are processed within the mandated timeframes.

As stated above, the site plan review process is a critical component of land development that involves a coordinated effort to ensure that public and private infrastructure is designed to meet the needs of the community and to support emergency services along with ensuring that the environment is protected. Without this coordinated review, additional burdens would be placed upon the property owners as well as public maintaining authorities. Public safety could be jeopardized due to insufficient fire protection and inadequate emergency access. Through proper planning and design, flooding and drainage problems are averted, environmental degradation due to inadequate water quality or erosion and sediment control measures can be avoided, and structural damages to buildings and structures from landslide prone or other soils related problem soil can be reduced.

A reorganization in FY 2000 allowed the Divisions of this CAPS to provide greater attention to code revisions, delegate authority to the lowest practicable level, eliminate management layers, and improve customer access and advocacy. Although the reorganization has been implemented, the redesign process continues with a review of policies and processes to identify and implement recommendations for improved service.

Specific services that this CAPS provides include:

- Review of applications to ensure that the environment is protected through the implementation of properly designed Stormwater, Erosion and Sedimentation Controls.
- Promote tree preservation and planting by providing technical expertise on arboricultural issues to County staff and County citizens.
- Oversee the implementation and completion of the initiatives recommended by the Tree Preservation Task Force in FY 1999.
- Review and processing of engineer plans submitted for land development for conformance with Federal, State and local ordinances, and Board of Supervisors policies.
- Administer the intake, tracking and processing of construction plans and documents for the Office of Site Development Services and respond to customer inquiries and request for reproduction of documents.
- Review of studies relating to proposed developments in problem soils, in proximity to floodplains, and in densely developed neighborhoods.

## *Land Development Services*

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- Collaborate with the Engineers and Surveyors Institute (ESI) a public/private professional organization representing the engineering industry, and other County agencies involved in land development to seek improvements in the quality and timeliness of plan preparation and review.
- Process amendments to the Public Facilities Manual as well as relevant sections of the Code of the County of Fairfax, and the Zoning Ordinance.
- Conduct community outreach programs, such as meetings with industry representatives, and Open House sessions to disseminate development standard, conservation, and tree preservation information.
- Provide support to religious and community groups, the development community, citizens and other County agencies throughout the site development process and to be a mediator for site development issues.
- Identify potential deficiencies in proposed development projects during plan review so that no development process ceases construction as a result of deficiencies identifiable on the plans.
- Serve in an advisory role on tree related issues ranging from site plan and zoning case review to assistance with final inspections.

### **Funding Sources**

Under State law, reasonable fees may be charged in-line with costs. Consistent with the policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors in April 1993, DPWES collects fees for plan review, and inspections, designed to recover at least 80 percent of the Land Development Services' costs. It should be noted that actual costs incurred by this program include imputed rent, fringe benefits, support services and information technology which are included in the Adopted Budget Plan expenditures.

### **Customers Include**

Homeowners, builders, developers, engineers, architects, land surveyors, attorneys, contractors, other County agencies, as well as the Counties Boards, Authorities, and Commissions.

However, since ensuring safe building, dwellings and infrastructure and enforcing quality development standards are DPWES' primary goal, all County citizens are recipients of DPWES' services.

### **Trends**

As open space continues to diminish in the County, development is occurring on more complex sites, which had been overlooked previously for economic reasons. Considerations including problem soils, proximity to flood plains, inadequate infrastructure, and densely developed surrounding neighborhoods created additional financial expenditures that made development in those areas less attractive in years past. These areas have now begun to be developed resulting in greater technical challenges for both the design engineers and Site Plan Review and Processing. More difficult sites require more coordination and review of the proposed construction documents as well as more special studies and reports to address special issues.

### **Key Initiatives**

- Environmental protection through the implementation of the Stormwater and Erosion and Sedimentation Control Recommendations and Tree Preservation Recommendations of the In-fill and Residential Development Report Study.
- Developing and implementing procedures to address proposed County Code and Public Facilities Manual modifications.
- Establishing of a Tree Preservation Task Force Team to examine and implement methodologies and practices that can be used to maximize the preservation of existing trees and forests during the land development process.
- Improving customer service by consolidating the intake of construction plans, documents and applications into one location.
- Implementing recommendations to improve record management by eliminating document duplications and initiating an electronic imaging program.
- Implementing recommendations from the 2001 Engineering Institute (ESI) workshop:
  - Update the Plans and Waivers System (PAWS) to allow reviewing agencies access to update and track their information.
  - Develop a process to provide County reviewers comments back to the submitting engineers immediately without having to wait for County reviewer's consolidation of comments.
  - Provide a mechanism for automating log-in construction plans, documents, and applications.
  - Develop and implement recommendations for improving the process of attachment and removal of approval conditions.
  - Examine the review process to determine what can be done earlier in the process. (e.g. signal, striping, traffic and pavement plans etc.)

### **Future Initiatives**

- Develop a Citizens Guide to the land development process in Fairfax County, which could be helpful to design professionals, citizens and staff.
- Revise Zoning Ordinance Article 13, Landscaping and Screening to bring the screening ordinance up to date so that the requirements will be more in alignment with the needs of infill lot development.
- Refine the County's tree cover goals pertaining to the results of the Tree Cover Study, which was commissioned by the Tree Preservation Task Force.
- Refine quality control program in plan review to ensure processes and procedures are adequate for increasing complex development.

## *Land Development Services*

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### **Accomplishments**

- Completed enhancements to the computer system supporting the land development process, Land Development System (LDS), to leverage new technologies to improve the plan review process, including placing LDSnet on the Internet at [www.co.fairfax.va.us/ldsnet](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/ldsnet). Through LDSnet, customers and citizens can retrieve information on site development related plans and studies.
- Participated in the Infill and Residential Study including numerous stake holder meetings.
- Completed work on a dual-unit Public Facilities Manual (PFM), which was adopted by the Board in January 2001. The dual-unit PFM will aid designers as they transition from the past requirement for preparation of plans using metric units to the option of using English or metric units, and will provide staff with the ability to review both English and metric plans now and in the future.
- Developed additional on-line service for customers, providing, among other things, an on-line Public Facilities Manual (PFM).
- Studied and reported to the Board of Supervisors on "Tree Transplanting on Development Sites: "Benefits, Methods, and Keys to Success".
- Responded to the Board of Supervisors' request for timely processing of religious and community group projects by creating from an existing position, an Ombudsman position to assist these groups through the development process from zoning to residential occupancy.
- Implemented enhancements to existing processes and Code requirements to improve Storm water, Erosion and Sedimentation Control, and Tree preservation during development.

### **► Method of Service Provision**

- Regular merit County employees provide the services of this County activity and program.
- Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

## *Land Development Services*

### ► Performance/Workload Related Data

Title	FY 1997 Actual	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Actual	FY 2002 Estimate
1 <sup>st</sup> submission subdivision and site plans	208	274	274	265	231	231
1 <sup>st</sup> submission grading plans (Bonded)	1,435	1,160	1,571	1,856	1,472	1,472
In-fill Lot grading plans (non-bonded)	497	574	661	842	763	763
Site and subdivision reviews processed (includes 1 <sup>st</sup> and subsequent submissions)	488	529	585	560	505	505
Minor plans and special projects completed	3,703	3,621	4,073	4,122	3,783	3,783
Zoning cases reviewed	0	72	154	283	208	208

### ► Mandate Information

This CAPS is Federally or State mandated. The percentage of this CAPS' resources utilized to satisfy the mandate is 76 - 100%. The specific Federal or State code and a brief description of the code follows:

- Code of Virginia Section 15.2-465 - Localities are required to adopt ordinances regulating the subdivision of land and its development.
- Code of Virginia Section 15.2-466 through 475 - Subdivision Plats and Site Plans. A landowner or subdivider who wishes to subdivide land, to which the subdivision ordinance applies, shall submit a plat of subdivision for review by the locality. An approved subdivision plat is required for recordation of the land subdivision.
- Code of Virginia Section 10.1-563, 565 - Conservation. An erosion and sediment control plan for any proposed regulated land disturbing activities shall be submitted to the locality for review prior to any land disturbing activity. Approval of an erosion and sediment control plan and issuance of a grading, building, or other permit by the locality is required prior to the commencement of land disturbing activities.
- Code of Virginia Section 10.1-560 - All areas of the state are required to have an erosion and sediment control program that is consistent with State guidelines and minimum standards. The program shall be implemented by local governments through ordinances and local programs that provide for plan review, inspections, and enforcement.
- Code of Virginia Section 54.1-410 - Local governments must establish a procedure to ensure that plans, specifications, or calculations prepared in connection with improvements to real property be prepared by a licensed or certified architect, professional engineer, land surveyor or landscape architect.

## *Land Development Services*

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- Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC) 105.5.1 - As part of the application process for construction permits; localities shall review and, where deemed acceptable, approve a site plan.
- Code of Virginia 10.1-2100 through 2116 - Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. Localities shall ensure that critical areas, which have been designated in accordance with Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act regulations as either Resource Protection or Resource Management Areas on construction plans, are either not disturbed or that certain provisions of development are met. Additionally, localities shall ensure that required pollution abatement measures which are required by the Act or as provisions of approval provided and met.
- 24 CFR Chapter 1, Section 2 through 5 - Final Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines. Localities shall review proposed plans for development of dwelling units to ensure that the provisions, pertaining to the accessibility set forth in the technical guidelines of the Fair Housing Act, will be met.
- 28 CFR Part 36, Subpart A, Section 36.104 and Subpart D - Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. Regulations require that all site plans, with certain minor exceptions, be reviewed to confirm that they are in compliance with the accessibility guidelines.
- Code of Virginia Section 42.1-76 - Localities shall comply with regulations issued by the State Library Board to inventory, schedule, and microfilm official records of counties and cities. (1972)
- Code of Virginia Section 2.1-340.1 - Local governments must comply with the Freedom of Information Act by providing ready public access records in the custody of public officials.